

## BOOK REVIEW

JOHN W. TUNNELL JR., JEAN ANDREWS, NOE C. BARRERA, AND FABIO MORETZSOHN. 2010. **Encyclopedia of Texas Seashells: Identification, Ecology, Distribution, and History**. (ISBN: 978-1-60344-141-4, hbk.). Texas A&M University Press, John H. Lindsey Bldg., Lewis St. 4354 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843-4354, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.tamupress.com, 800-826-8911). \$50.00, 512 pp., 8.5" × 11".

*Contents:* 1) Shells in Texas Coastal History. 2) Chronology of Marine Malacology in Texas. 3) Molluscan Ecology and Habitats. 4) Collecting Seashells. 5) General Features of Mollusks. 6) Texas Seashells. 7) Class Aplousobranchia; a-Class Polyplacophora (Chitons); b-Class Gastropoda (Snails); c-Class Cephalopoda (Squid, Octopus); d-Class Bivalvia (Bivalves); e-Class Scaphopoda (Tusk Shells). 8) Appendix: Outline of Classification and Checklist of Texas Seashells. 9) Glossary. 10) References. 11) Index.

*Encyclopedia of Texas Seashells* is just that: an encyclopedia providing everything an amateur, naturalist, or researcher would need regarding Texas seashells. While perhaps written with a scientific audience in mind, this text is accessible to a wide range of audiences. This book is 8.5 × 11 inches, hardbound, and the size and weight of a textbook; it is not a field guide by any means. The book is full of 987 color photographs, 12 black and white photos, 15 maps, 18 line drawings, several figures and tables, and a complete glossary, bibliography, and index.

Chapter 1, Shells in Texas Coastal History, provides a brief summary of geologic history of coastlines and how they formed, as well as a summary of the uses (construction, tools, ornaments, food, etc.) of seashells dating back to the early Archaic era (over 4,500 years ago).

Chapter 2, Chronology of Marine Malacology in Texas, provides a list of texts on malacology in chronological order, and then discusses some of the scientists instrumental to the field.

Chapter 3, Molluscan Ecology and Habitats, provides a physical description of the Texas coast with black and white maps and a few color photographs. This section describes the bays and estuaries and the rivers that flow into them. The next section discusses the factors that affect mollusk distribution, e.g. temperature, seasons, salinity, turbidity, etc. There are ecological descriptions of habitats (coastal marshes, bay bottoms, reefs, sea meadows, flats, jetties, beaches, banks, etc.) where mollusks can be found. These descriptions include species of mollusk common in that habitat, typical vegetation type, temperature, salinity, and predator-prey interactions within these habitats. Also included are color plates with images of the species assemblages typical of each habitat.

Chapter 4, Collecting Seashells, contains very brief descriptions of how to collect, maintain, buy, sell, and trade shells. Lacking from this section is a suggested listing of necessary data if you are collecting shells for scientific purposes.

Chapter 5, General Features of Mollusks, describes the different features of each class of mollusk, complete with detailed, labeled images (including posterior, anterior, dorsal, and ventral views), that are large, clear, and easily understood.

Chapter 6, Texas Seashells, makes up the bulk of the text (295 pp.), sorted taxonomically by class, subclass, family, genus, and species. The taxonomic hierarchy is at the top of each page, making it easy to locate information while flipping through the text. A brief paragraph discusses each class and family. Each species description includes a photograph, the scientific name of the organism and its authorities, common name, distribution, size, brief physical description, habitat, remarks, and synonymous scientific names if applicable. This information is given in sections with bold headings for quick reference. For some species, sections on phenotypic variation and juvenile identification are provided.

Overall this appears to be a very complete overview of Texas Seashells and "must have" reference material for anyone interested in them. Again, this book is textbook size and is not meant to be a small field guide. It contains clear photographs of every species with a black background and is organized in a manner that makes it good quick reference material.

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